

**II) Please Amend Claims 1, 3-16, 18-23, and 25-26 as set for the blow:**

(Currently Amended) 1. A security tag comprising:

5                   a tag body;  
                     an attaching means for attaching said tag body to an article;  
                     and  
10                  a locking means for releasably preventing said attaching  
                     means from being removed from said article wherein said  
                     locking means is provided for to mechanically release by  
asserting a rotational force along a traversal direction to said  
locking means or magnetically released release by applying  
15                  a magnetic force along a vertical direction to said locking  
means to release said attaching means for detaching said tag  
                     body from said article.

(Original) 2. The security tag of claim 1 wherein:

20                  said locking means further includes a plurality of balls for  
                     tightly holding to said attaching means for releasably  
                     preventing said attaching means from being removed from  
                     said article.

25                  (Currently Amended) 3. The security tag of claim 2 wherein:

30                  said locking means further includes a mechanical unlocking  
                     means for mechanically applying a rotational mechanical  
                     force to said locking means to release said balls from said  
                     attaching means whereby said attaching means may be  
                     released and detached from said tag body.

(Currently Amended) 4. The security tag of claim 2 wherein:

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said locking means further includes a magnetic unlocking means for magnetically applying a mechanical vertical magnetic force to said locking means to release said balls from said attaching means whereby said attaching means may be released and detached from said tag body.

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said locking means further includes a ball tightening and loosening means for tightening said balls to said attaching means; and

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said locking means further includes a mechanical unlocking means for mechanically applying a rotational mechanical force along a traversal direction to said ball tightening and loosening means for loosening said balls from said attaching means whereby said attaching means may be released and detached from said tag body.

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(Currently Amended) 6. The security tag of claim 2 wherein:

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said locking means further includes a ball tightening and loosening means for tightening said balls to said attaching means; and

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said locking means further includes a magnetic unlocking means for applying a mechanical magnetic force along a vertical direction to release said balls from said attaching means whereby said attaching means may be released and detached from said tag body.

(Currently Amended) 7. The security tag of claim 5 wherein:

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said ball tightening and loosening means further includes a ball surrounding surface defining a restrict space and an expanded space for forcing said balls into said restrict space for tightening said balls to said attaching means; and

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said mechanical unlocking means further mechanically applying a rotational mechanical force to said ball surrounding surface along a traversal direction to move said balls to said expanded space of said ball tightening and loosening means for loosening said balls from said attaching means whereby said attaching means may be released and detached from said tag body.

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(Currently Amended) 8. The security tag of claim 6 wherein:

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said ball tightening and loosening means further includes a ball surrounding surface defining a restrict space and an expanded space for forcing said balls into said restrict space for tightening said balls to said attaching means; and

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said magnetic unlocking means further applying a magnetic force along a vertical direction to said surrounding surface to move said balls to said expanded space of said ball tightening and loosening means for loosening said balls from said attaching means whereby said attaching means may be released and detached from said tag body.

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(Currently Amended) 9. The security tag of claim 7 wherein:

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said ball tightening and loosening means further includes ball holding cup having a plurality of holes for each of said balls surrounded by said ball surrounding surface wherein said locking means pressing said ball holding cup for forcing said balls into said restrict space for tightening said balls to said attaching means; and

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said mechanical unlocking means further mechanically applying a mechanical rotational force along a traversal direction to move said ball holding cup together with said balls to said expanded space of said ball tightening and loosening means for loosening said balls from said attaching means whereby said attaching means may be released and detached from said tag body.

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(Currently Amended) 10. The security tag of claim 8 wherein:

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said ball tightening and loosening means further includes a ball holding cup having a plurality of holes for each of said balls surrounded by said ball surrounding surface wherein said locking means pressing said ball holding cup for forcing said balls into said restrict space for tightening said balls to said attaching means; and

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said magnetic unlocking means further applying a magnetic force along a vertical direction to move said ball holding cup together with said balls along said vertical direction to said expanded space of said ball tightening and loosening means for loosening said balls from said attaching means whereby said attaching means may be released and detached from said tag body.

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(Currently Amended) 11. The security tag of claim 1 further comprising:

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a mechanical probe finger for mechanically pushing and applying a mechanical force along a traversal direction onto said locking means to rotate and release said attaching means whereby said attaching means may be released and detached from said tag body.

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(Currently Amended) 12. The security tag of claim 1 further comprising:

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a magnet for applying a magnetic force along said vertical direction onto said locking means to release said attaching means whereby said attaching means may be released and detached from said tag body.

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(Currently Amended) 13. A security tag comprising an attaching means for attaching said tag to a protected article further comprising:

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a locking means for locking said attaching means for releasably preventing said attaching means from being removed from said protected article wherein said locking means is provided to be unlocked for releasing said attaching means from said tag by one of at two different kinds of unlocking means wherein each of said two kinds of unlocking means applying at least two different kinds of forces along at least two different directions to said locking means.

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(Currently Amended) 14. The security tag of claim 13 wherein:

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said locking means is provided to be unlocked by a mechanical unlocking means applying a rotational force along a traversal direction and a magnetic unlocking means applying a magnetic force along a vertical direction to said locking means.

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(Currently Amended) 15. The security tag of claim 13 further comprising:

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a mechanical probe finger for pushing and applying a mechanical rotational force along said traversal direction onto said locking means to release said attaching means whereby said attaching means may be released and detached from said tag body.

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(Currently Amended) 16. The security tag of claim 13 further comprising:

a magnet for applying a magnetic force along said vertical direction onto said locking means to release said attaching means whereby said attaching means may be released and detached from said tag body.

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(Original) 17. The security tag of claim 13 wherein:

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said locking means further includes a plurality of balls for tightly holding to said attaching means for releasably preventing said attaching means from being removed from said article.

(Currently Amended) 18. The security tag of claim 13 wherein:

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said locking means further includes a mechanical unlocking means for mechanically applying a mechanical rotational force along said traversal direction to release said balls from said attaching means whereby said attaching means may be released and detached from said security tag.

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(Currently Amended) 19. The security tag of claim 13 wherein:

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said locking means further includes a magnetic unlocking means for applying a magnetic force along said vertical direction to release said balls from said attaching means whereby said attaching means may be released and detached from said security tag.

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(Currently Amended) 20. A method for protecting an article by using an attaching means for attaching a security tag to a protected article further comprising:

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preventing said attaching means from being removed from said protected article by releaseably locking said attaching means and unlocking and releasing said attaching means from said tag by either one of at two different kinds of unlocking means with each of said two kinds of unlocking means applying at least two different kinds of forces along at least two different directions to said locking means.

(Currently Amended) 21. The method of claim 20 wherein:

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said step of locking said attaching means and then unlocking said attaching means by either of at least two different kinds of unlocking means further comprising a step of unlocking said attaching means by either a mechanical unlocking means for applying a rotational force along a traversal direction and a magnetic unlocking means for applying a magnetic force along a vertical direction to said locking means.

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(Currently Amended) 22. The method claim 21 further wherein:

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said step of unlocking said attaching means by a mechanical unlocking means further comprising a step of applying a mechanical probe finger for pushing and applying a mechanical rotational force along said traversal direction onto said locking means to release said attaching means whereby said attaching means may be released and detached from said tag body.

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(Currently Amended) 23. The method of claim 21 further comprising:

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said step of unlocking said attaching means by a magnetic unlocking means further comprising a step of applying a magnet for applying a magnetic force along said vertical direction onto said locking means to release said attaching means whereby said attaching means may be released and detached from said tag body.

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(Original) 24. The method of claim 21 wherein:

5            said step of releaseably locking said attaching means further comprising a step of employing a plurality of balls for tightly holding to said attaching means for releasably preventing said attaching means from being removed from said article.

(Currently Amended) 25. The security tag of claim 24 wherein:

10            said step of unlocking said attaching means further comprising a step of employing a mechanical unlocking means for mechanically applying a mechanical rotational force along said traversal direction to release said balls from said attaching means whereby said attaching means may be released and detached from said security tag.

(Currently Amended) 26. The security tag of claim ~~13~~ 24 wherein:

20            said step of unlocking said attaching means further comprising a step of employing a magnetic unlocking means for applying a magnetic force along said vertical direction to release said balls from said attaching means whereby said attaching means may be released and detached from said security tag.